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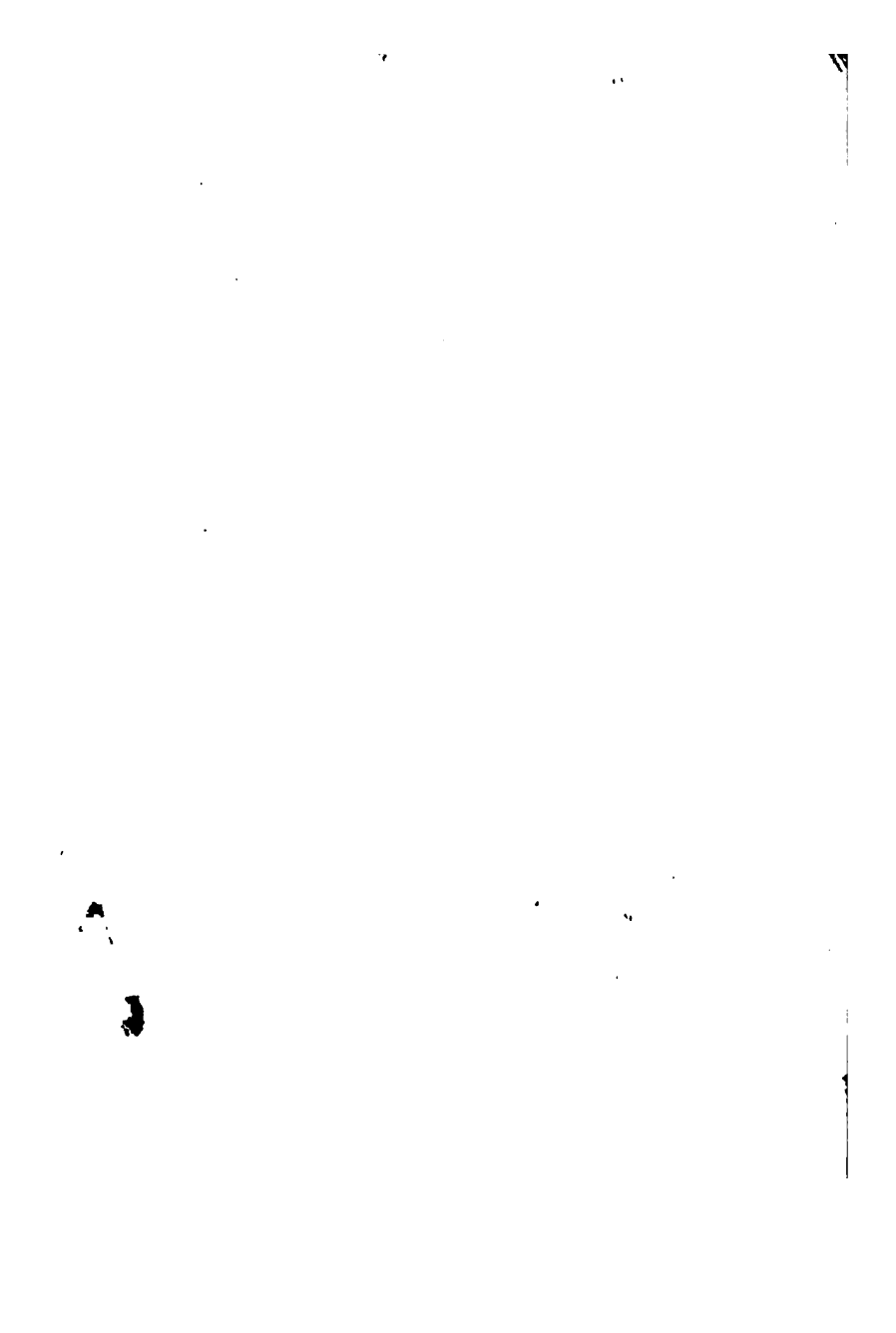
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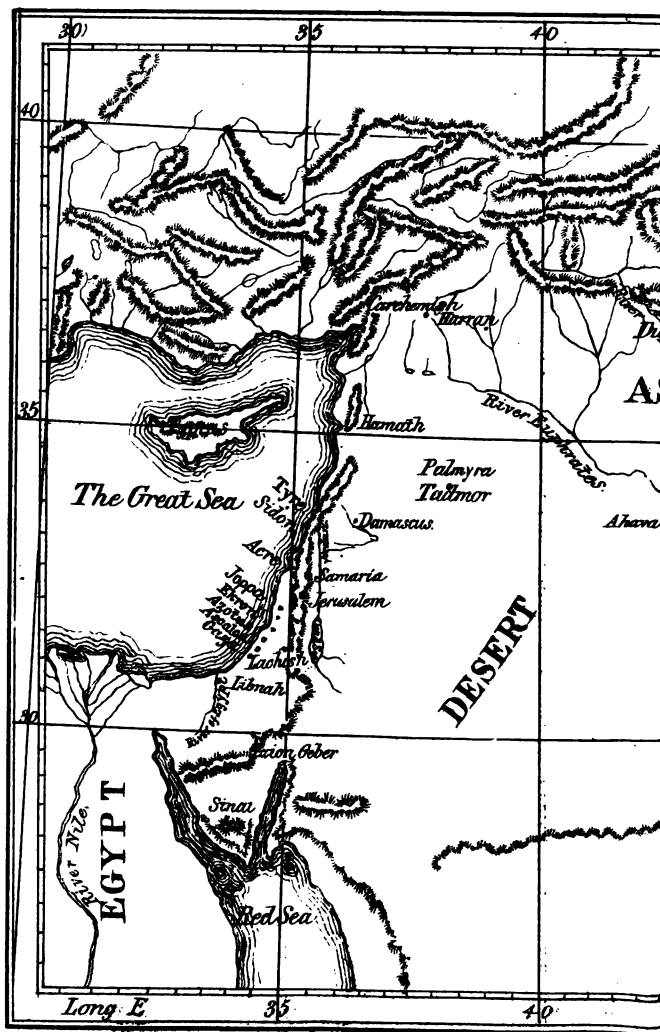
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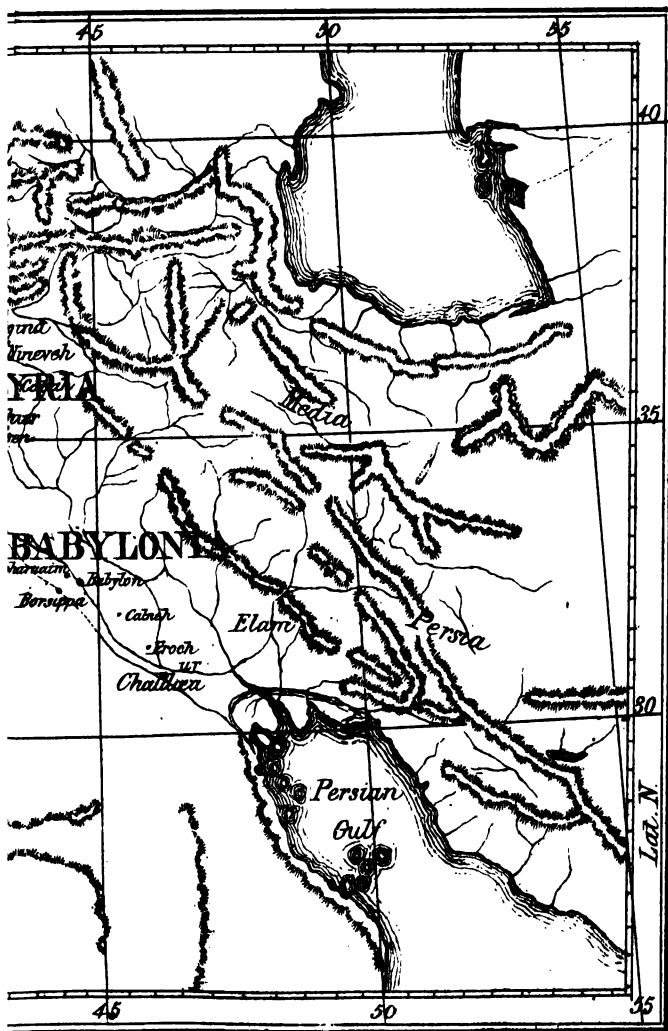


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Illustrations of Scripture History.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF
SCRIPTURE HISTORY

FROM THE MONUMENTS OF
EGYPT CHALDÆA ASSYRIA & BABYLONIA

WITH A FEW WORDS ON THE
Mosaic Record of Creation

AND A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE SEVERAL
VERSIONS AND TRANSLATIONS OF THE BIBLE

With Map



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1866

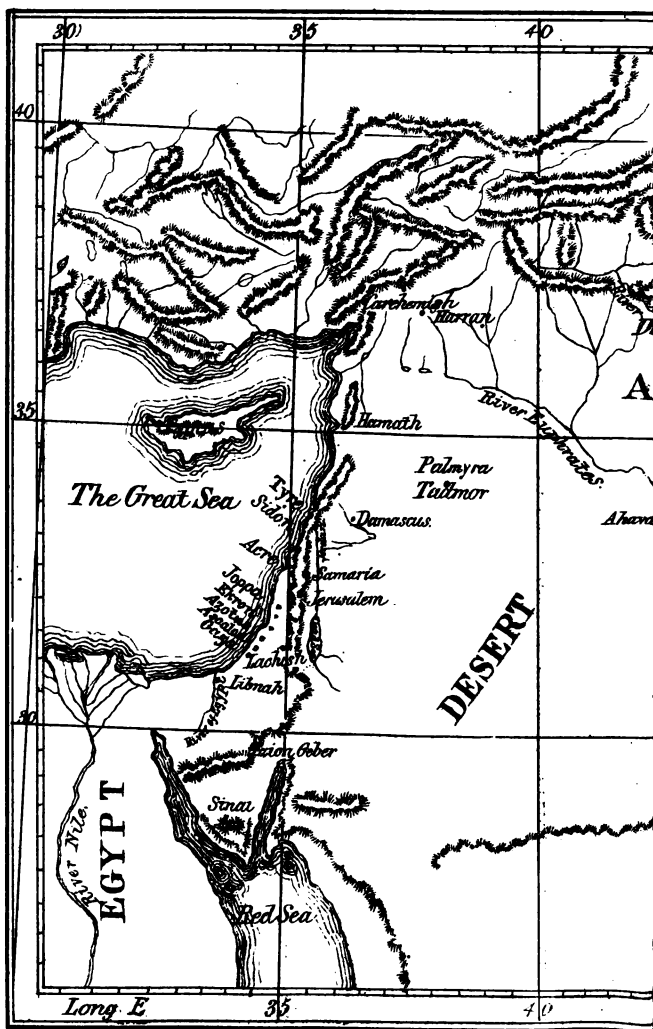
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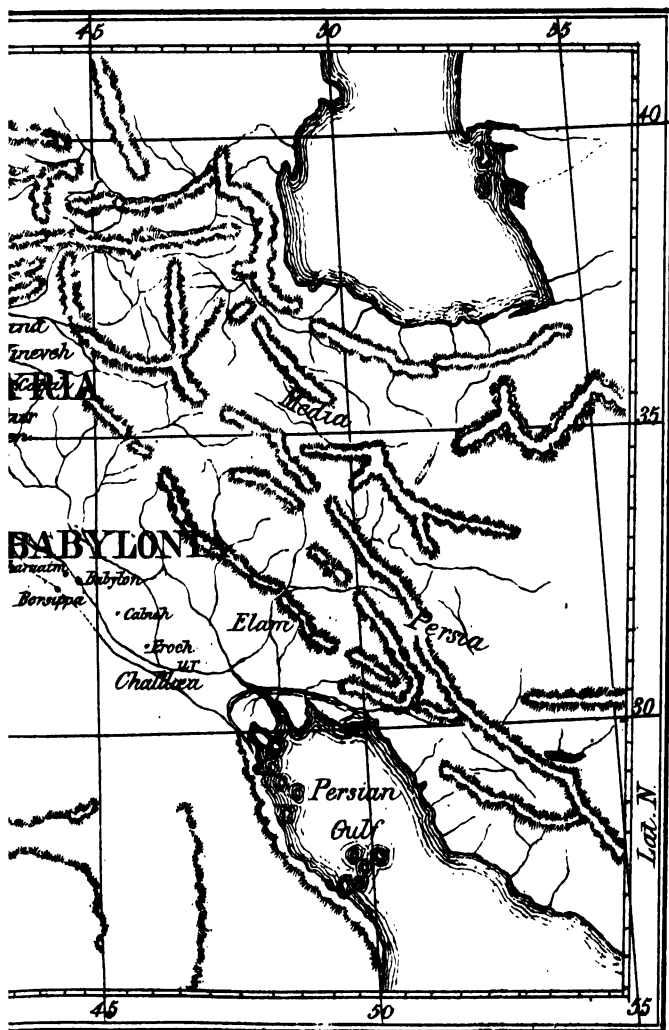


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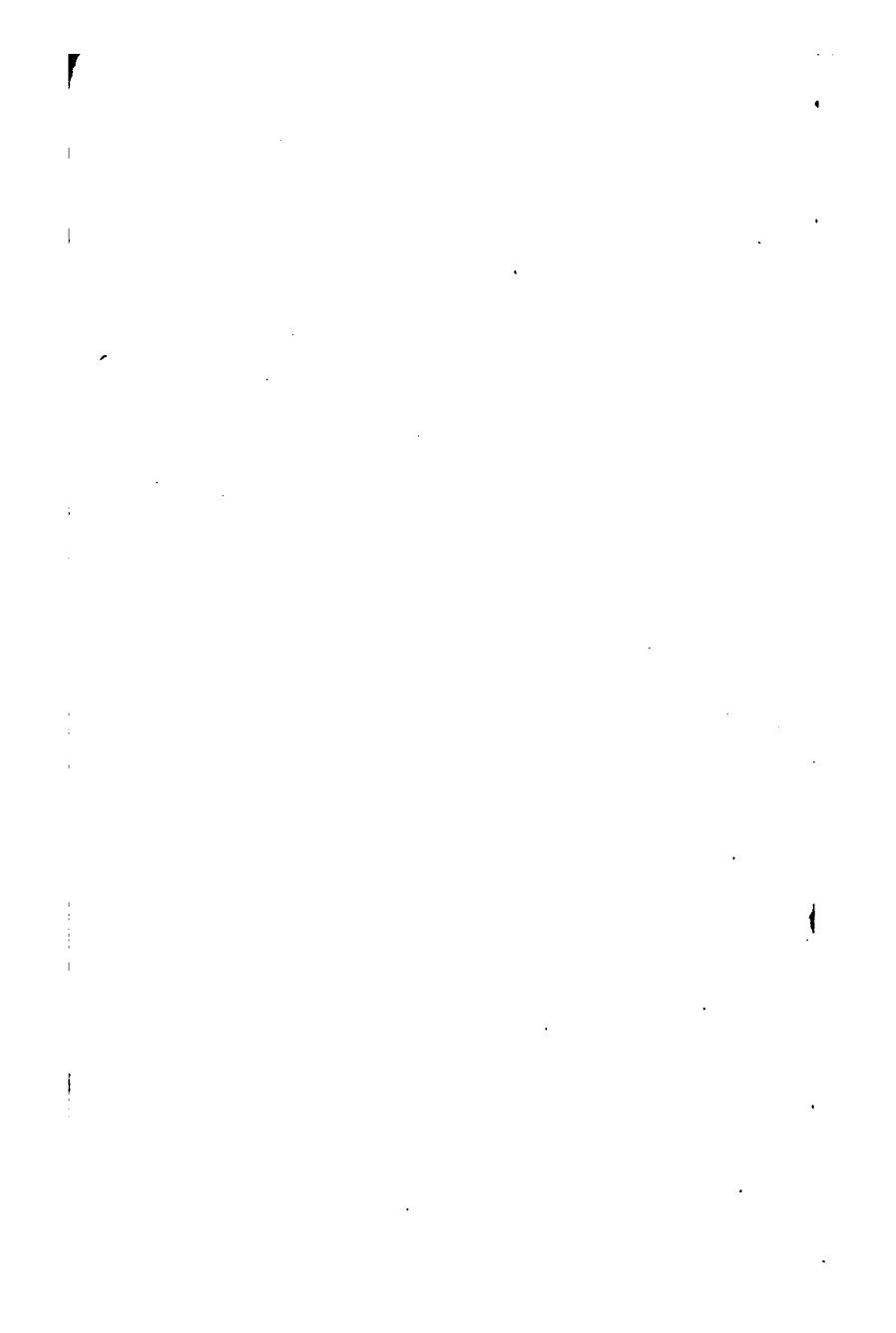








Illustrations of Scripture History.



1. The first part of the document is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various offices of the government.

2. The second part of the document is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various offices of the government.

3. The third part of the document is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various offices of the government.



feudal system ; and it seems that a reverse or defeat sustained by the suzerain power was generally the signal for the revolt of all the dependent nations, when, unless the whole process of conquest could be recommenced, the result was the dissolution of the empire.

The foundation of the Mesopotamian empire is recorded in the tenth chapter of Genesis, the "Book of the Generations of the Sons of Noah," which is considered by the highest authority* to be the most authentic record that we possess for the affiliation of nations. And here we meet with one of the most important instances in which recent researches have proved the correctness of the sacred record, in contradiction to what has been asserted by some of the highest literary and ethnological authorities.†

The Book of Genesis says, (x. 8,) "And Cush begat Nimrod ; he began to be a mighty one in the earth ;"—(x. 10,) "And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar."

The three great families of nations deriving their descent from the three sons of Noah are distinguished by the nature and composition of their languages ; and such learned men as Bunsen and Niebuhr have taught that the whole of the inhabitants of Mesopotamia spoke a Semitic tongue, or a language of the descendants of Shem.

The discoveries of Sir H. Rawlinson have enabled him to pronounce the vocabulary of the most ancient

* Sir H. C. Rawlinson.

† Bunsen, Niebuhr.

inhabitants of Chaldæa to be "decidedly Cushite or Ethiopian." And no learned man will now venture to question that "Cush begat Nimrod."

Again, it is said, (Gen. x. 11,) "Out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh," Asshur being (ver. 22) of the sons of Shem; and it is found that the languages of Assyria, and of the later kingdom of Babylon, (when under Assyrian influence,) was decidedly Semitic.

The prominence given to the greatness of Nimrod in the Book of Genesis is in perfect agreement with the records of the monuments.* In his own nation he seems to have been deified, and to have continued, down to the latest times, one of the leading objects of worship, under the title of Bilu-Nipru, or Bel-Nimrod, which may be translated "The God of the Chase," or "The Mighty Hunter."

After the lapse of so many centuries—after the ruin of the great empires he founded—the wandering Arab still gives the name of "Nimrod" to the most conspicuous of the huge mounds which, covering the ruins of lost cities, break the level of the plains of Shinar. In the city of Calneh was Nimrod especially honoured and worshipped.

Records of the great Chaldæan empire have been found which go back to a period probably 300 years before the time of Abraham, or to B.C. 2234, if we adopt the chronology usually printed in our reference Bibles; but it must be remembered that these dates do not constitute any part of Scripture, but are

* Rawlinson's "Five Great Monarchies," vol. i. p. 196.

merely the interpretation of the numbers occasionally given incidentally in Scripture histories, by men who, though both learned and well read, were quite liable to error.

The situation of "Ur of the Chaldees," which has long been disputed,* is now believed to have been at a place not far from the mouth of the Euphrates, at present called Mugheir, and excavations made on the site have furnished most interesting records of its early kings. It is remarkable that it has been found that the name Khaldi, or Chaldæans, given to the people, is, in one dialect, equivalent to the name Hur, or Ur, in another, and that both words refer to the worship of the moon by the inhabitants of the city.

There seems reason to believe that a large migration was going on in the days of Terah from Ur and its neighbourhood, along the bank of the Euphrates, to Haran, and it was therefore from an idolatrous nation that his God called Abram, to make of him the father of many nations.

The event which next, after the departure of Terah, connects the Chaldæans with Scripture history, is the expedition of Chedorlaomer into Palestine, which is recorded in Gen. xiv. 1. And here we meet with the first instance of an empire such as has been referred to, in which the subject-kings retained their thrones† and titles, but "served Chedorlaomer twelve years."

* Dr Stanley, in his "Lectures on the Jewish Church," places Ur far to the north of this site, which is given on the high authority of Sir H. C. Rawlinson.

† See page 8.

In the history of this event we find Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, or the country north-east of Chaldæa, and foreign to the Chaldæans, acting as lord paramount to Amraphel king of Shinar or Chaldæa, Arioch, king of Ellasar, (perhaps the city Larsa,) and Tidal, (who is called in the Greek translation Thargal, a name which means "great chief,") king of "nations," or of the nomadic tribes who roved over the lands north of Chaldæa and of Elam. This story has been most curiously illustrated by the inscriptions recovered in Chaldæa. It was at one time believed that the very name of Chedorlaomer himself had been found on the monuments, but subsequent researches* have rendered it probable that the monumental king was the grandson of Chedorlaomer; and it is most remarkable that a reference to "The West" has been found in his records. The fact of the supremacy of the Elamites at this period over Chaldæa has been ascertained from the monuments; and the whole story, which would hardly have found a place in Scripture but for the accident of Lot's captivity, and his deliverance by Abram, has received from these ancient records testimony which could be expected from the remains of a long extinct nation, and of so early a date. It may be remarked, too, that Abram is said by the Bible narrative to have overtaken the confederate kings near Damascus, nearly 150 miles north of the scene of their victory over the king of Sodom and his allies. It is there-

* See note by Sir H. Rawlinson in Rawlinson and Wilkinson's "Herodotus," vol. i. p. 355. (Murray, 1862.)

fore clear, that instead of taking the direct route home eastward over the desert, the Elamites were marching to strike the Euphrates somewhere near Carehemish ; and there is abundant evidence that this was, and long continued to be, the regular track between Palestine and Mesopotamia.

It is desirable to observe, that in this, as in all other cases where Scripture gives the names of kings and personages of foreign nations, either the very names have been found on the monuments, or they can be proved to be names such as the persons mentioned must have borne ; and to contrast with this accuracy the mistakes of a Greek historian,* who attempted to restore or forge ancient records of Mesopotamia, and who assigned to the kings in his list names as manifestly impossible as if a modern writer were to call the Lord Mayor of London Mehemet Ali, or the Sultan of Turkey John Smith.

The fortunes of the descendants of Abraham did not again bring any of them into contact with the Chaldæans before the fall of their empire, which occurred about B.C. 1518. No further mention of them occurs in Scripture ; and when next the Jewish historians were obliged to take notice of Mesopotamia, the great Assyrian empire was beginning to grow into that strength and importance which made it the dominant power of Asia.

Before passing beyond the times of Abraham, one most interesting memorial may be noticed,—the cave

* See Sir H. Rawlinson's Essay VII. in Raw. and Wil. "Herodotus," and note on the names in Ctesias' History.

of Machpelah, in which is the grave of that great patriarch.

Reverenced alike by Jew, Christian, and Moham-medan, the cave has remained in all probability undisturbed to this day, and is one of the very few sacred sites which can be identified with certainty. Over the cave is now a mosque, which was once a Christian church, but into which for many centuries no Christian has been admitted, to profane, as the Moslem think, with his presence the resting-place of the "friend of God." The first to break through this prohibition was H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, who, after many difficulties, succeeded in obtaining entrance for himself and suite into the mosque, though he could not penetrate to the cave beneath.*

Chushan-rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia, or, as it is written in the margin of our Bibles, "Aram Naharaim," (Judges iii. 8,) who oppressed the children of Israel after their settlement in Palestine for eight years, was from the country round Haran, which the Hebrews knew by the name of Aram Naharaim, and not of the true Mesopotamia. No record of this king beyond the Bible histories has been preserved, but the Assyrian monuments lead us to presume that he had no connexion with any part of the true Mesopotamia.

The monumental records of Egypt cannot be dealt with in a way so satisfactory as those of Chaldæa, Assyria, and Babylonia. Lists of kings, more or less

* An account of this visit is given in Dr Stanley's "Lectures on the Jewish Church."

complete, are found both on the monuments and in such fragments of the historian Manetho as have been preserved to us ; but no satisfactory chronological scheme has as yet been proposed, and learned men differ widely as to the order in which the several "dynasties" are to be arranged. There were, it seems, on many occasions, two or more kings reigning at one time in Egypt, and it is a matter of dispute as to which of the kings were contemporaries. The monuments of Egypt have as yet furnished us with no direct and distinct record of the sojourn of Israel in Egypt ; but they abound with illustrations of the facts recorded in Scripture, and prove that Moses was perfectly acquainted with the learning, habits, laws, manners, and customs of the Egyptians, and that many of the laws which he conveyed to the Jews were directly levelled at the superstitions and practices of the Egyptians. Manetho indeed, the Egyptian priest and historian, has given a distorted and probably falsified account of the exodus, in which he calls Moses a priest of Heliopolis or On ; disguises the name Hebrew under the form of "Abaris," and claims for his countrymen the honour of having driven the Hebrews out of Egypt into Palestine. And it is impossible to identify, with any approach to certainty, either Abraham's Pharaoh, Joseph's patron, the king who knew not Joseph, or the Pharaoh of the exodus.

So many pictures from Egyptian sculptures have been published, that it is almost superfluous to mention the numerous illustrations they afford of the Bible story.

The high state of civilisation in Egypt in the earliest ages, which the Bible narrative infers, is conspicuous on numerous monuments. It is probable that the Great Pyramid, which in itself is a certain proof of a high state of science and art, is older than the time of Abraham. Writing was in common use, not only the picture emblems, commonly called "hieroglyphics," but a cursive character, in which the symbols represented syllables, if not, as our letters do, simple sounds.

The whole story of Joseph, and of the sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt, with all its minute circumstances, is, in all respects, in entire agreement with the manners of the ancient Egyptians, as depicted on their temples and monuments :—The purchase of slaves as domestic servants, and from the Ishmaelites, who "came from Gilead, with their camels bearing spicery, and balm, and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt," (Gen. xxxvii. 25.) The multiplication of attendants at the royal court, each with his special duties, as implied by "two of Pharaoh's officers, the chief of the butlers and the chief of the bakers," (Gen. xl. 2.) The "magicians" and wise men, (Gen. xli. 8.) That Joseph "shaved himself" * before appearing in Pharaoh's presence. The agricultural pursuits prevalent in Egypt, implied in the Bible narrative, (Gen. xli. 47-49.) The storing of corn in magazines, (Gen. xli. 56.) The ring and gold chain as an emblem of Joseph's authority, and his "vestures of fine linen," (Gen. xli. 42.) The fact that spies

* Compare the error of Herodotus, book ii. ch. 124, where he makes the soldiers wear beards.

from Palestine were likely to be discovered by the Egyptians, (Gen. xlii. 9.) The separation at Joseph's dinner, (Gen. xliii. 32.) The wheeled waggons, probably the first that Jacob ever saw, that were sent for him and his family, (Gen. xlv. 19.) The assignment of the land of Goshen for the residence of the Hebrews, because "every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians," (Gen. xlv. 34.) The abundance of cattle, of flocks and herds. That while the land of Egypt generally was subject to taxation, the property of the priests was exempt, (Gen. xlvii. 26.) The embalming of Jacob by the *physicians*, a process occupying forty days,* (Gen. l. 23.) The splendid procession at his funeral, and the mourning with a great and very sore lamentation, (Gen. l. 10.)

Every one of these numerous circumstances is completely and perfectly in accordance with the habits and customs of the Egyptians, which are very elaborately and minutely represented in the sculptures which adorn the tombs of their great personages; and it is beyond dispute that the Bible history of the latter part of the Book of Genesis must have been written by a person intimately acquainted with the manners of the court and people of Egypt.

Again, in the Book of Exodus there are innumerable most interesting points of agreement with the sculptures and history of Egypt. The ark made of bulrushes, (Ex. ii. 3.) The prominence given to

* Herodotus gives the period required in his time (about B.C. 440) for the most perfect method of embalming as seventy days. Diodorus Siculus states it as upwards of thirty.

"The River," and that the Egyptians depended on it for their drinking water, (Ex. ii. 5, vii. 15, 21, 24.) The danger to be apprehended from sacrificing the "abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes,"* (Ex. viii. 26.) The importance of the chariots in the Egyptian army, (Ex. xiv. 7.) The use of timbrels and various instruments of music. But especially interesting are the sculptures, which show the making of bricks by prisoners under the lash of the taskmaster. It has been objected to the Bible story that all the great edifices of Egypt are of stone; but the researches of modern explorers have established the fact that the brick buildings of Egypt were even more numerous and of greater cubic contents than those of stone. The highest authority on Egyptian antiquities, Sir G. Wilkinson, says, of the making of bricks:—"It was an occupation to which many prisoners of war were condemned, who, like the Jews, worked for the king, bricks being a government monopoly. The process is represented at Thebes, and is rendered doubly interesting from its exact correspondence with that described in Ex. v. 7-19, showing the hardness of the work, the tales of the bricks, the bringing of straw, and the Egyptian taskmaster set over the foreign workmen." The representation to which Sir G. Wilkinson refers was probably made when the Israelites were in Egypt; but, as the captives who make the bricks in this instance are said to be at Thebes, they cannot be intended for Jews.

In short, there is hardly an incident in the whole

* Compare Herodotus, book ii. chap. 65.

story of Israel in Egypt, but finds an illustration in the splendid memorials of the long-lost glory of Egypt.

The particular kings under whose reigns these events took place cannot, as has been said, be identified with any approach to certainty ; but it seems probable that the Israelites were in Egypt during the period of the eighteenth dynasty, which has been termed the "Augustine age" of Egypt, when its empire was most widely extended, and its arts and sciences were most flourishing. Sir G. Wilkinson seems inclined to consider Ptah-men, the successor of Remeses II., as the Pharaoh of the Exodus. The difficulty of fixing the date of this event is mainly, but not entirely, in the Egyptian records ; for there are certain obscurities in the chronology of the Bible, particularly in the Book of Judges, which render it impossible to fix exactly any date prior to the time of David. No mention of Egypt occurs after the settlement of the Jews in Palestine, until we learn that when David smote Edom, (1 Kings xi. 15-17,) Hadad, who was afterwards an adversary to Solomon, escaped to Egypt, and that Hadad found great favour with Pharaoh, who gave him to wife the sister of Taphenes the queen. The name of this queen has not been found on the Egyptian monuments.

The first king of the twenty-second dynasty is called Sheshonk on the monuments, Shishak in Scripture ; and with him Jeroboam found refuge when Solomon sought to slay him, (1 Kings xi. 40.) This king was friendly to Solomon, and would seem to have retained Jeroboam as a sort of state prisoner during the life of Solomon,

and when Solomon reigned over all kings from the river (Euphrates) unto the land of the Philistines and to the border of Egypt, (2 Chron. ix. 26.)

The great empire founded by David and enjoyed by Solomon was, in all respects, analogous to those common in Asia, before-mentioned.* We find that Solomon "reigned over all kings;" that he levied "a tribute of bond-service" from the subdued peoples, sparing his own native servants, (2 Chron. viii. 10; 1 Kings ix. 21, 22;) and that he obtained the assistance of skilled artificers from Tyre, in all which policy we shall find he was followed by the great monarchs of Assyria and Babylon. We also see how rapidly his empire fell when, at his death, the supreme power was crippled by the revolt of the ten tribes, to which Assyria and Babylon also furnish a parallel.

Some circumstances deserve notice at this period. The prominent position given to Tyre in the Scripture history, (1 Kings v. 1; 2 Chron. ii. 3,) Sidon not being mentioned; whereas, at the time of the entry of the Israelites into Palestine, Sidon is the city specially mentioned, (Josh. xiii. 4, 6.) From other sources we learn the gradual rise of Tyre, (the younger city,) and the decline of the importance of Sidon; and we also find that "Hiram," or "Huram," was a common Tyrian name.†

The wealth which Solomon derived from his trade

* See page 8.

† Mapen, son of "Sirom," the Tyrian, served in the fleet of Xerxes against Greece; Sirom being the Greek equivalent of this name.

from Ezion-geber, (1 Kings ix. 26,) on the Red Sea, (the possession of which port was often the cause of war in after days,) to Ophir* and the East, must strike the attention of Englishmen, who know so well what a mine of wealth has been drawn from the Indian trade. We see that Solomon was alive to what the Great Napoleon pronounced to be the first necessities of a great nation—"Ships, Colonies, and Commerce."

That linen, horses, and chariots were purchased in Egypt, (1 Kings x. 28, 29,) is quite consistent with the excellence of the manufacture of linen in that country, which is frequently mentioned in Scripture, and which may be verified at this day by an examination of the mummy wrappers in the British Museum. And the Egyptians are known to have paid great attention both to the breeding of horses and to the manufacture of chariots. Horses and chariots also were sold to "all the kings" of the Hittites, and to the kings of Syria, (1 Kings x. 29.) And the Assyrian records bear testimony to the preponderance of chariots and cavalry in the armies of the Hittites and Syrians, and frequently mention the many kings or chiefs of the Hittites. Similarly the mention of "all the kings of Arabia" is in accordance with what we know to have been the state of that country from time immemorial, (1 Kings x. 15.)

The magnificence of the buildings of Solomon are

* Sir E. Tennant, in his work on Ceylon, argues in favour of "Ophir" being in that island, and seems to make out a very good case.

amply illustrated by the description extant of the temple, and of his own palace, and the foundation of Baalbec, and of Palmyra, those wondrous cities, is attributed to him.

At Palmyra but little remains of the buildings of Solomon's age ; but at Baalbec the enormous stones of his buildings still excite the astonishment of travellers. One great mass of stone, probably intended for his edifices, has defied the efforts of succeeding nations to use it, and still remains only a short distance from the quarry. How it was moved so far, and by what means it was to be placed in its intended position, are problems which modern engineers have not solved. The stone is 69 feet long, 17 feet wide, and 14 feet deep ; it therefore contains 16,422 cubic feet of stone, and probably weighs about 1200 tons.*

Though we find, from the records both of Egypt and Assyria, that before the days of David each kingdom had repeatedly invaded the territories of the other, yet the monuments mention no wars or expeditions during the reigns of David and Solomon, by either Egypt or Assyria, over the countries mentioned in Scripture as included in the empire of Israel. The Bible story exactly fills the gap in the monumental history, and gives us a full and sufficient reason for the inactivity of those ordinarily aggressive powers, and the full extent of dominion attributed in Scripture to David and Solomon is in entire agreement with the records of the monuments.

* See Dr Thompson, "The Land and the Book," p. 235.

The reality and greatness of this Hebrew empire must not be overlooked. We are perhaps too ready to think of the Jews as a people always subject to the oppression of more powerful nations, and to forget that God *did* give them glory, dominion, and power,—a distinguished place among the great nations of the earth,—but that they wilfully cast His blessings away, went after other gods, and drew down on themselves punishments so terrible and lasting as almost to wipe out the memory of their great prosperity. Tradition in the East preserves to this day the memory of the greatness of Solomon, and the Arab, wandering among the ruined cities of Palestine, attributes all that remains of a lost civilisation to Solomon, son of David.

Almost immediately on the death of Solomon the revolt of the ten tribes from his son Rehoboam occurred, (2 Kings xii. 16–20.)

The great empire collapsed, and in all after times the power of the two kingdoms of Judah and Israel was confined to the actual districts occupied by their native subjects.

With the separation of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah commenced that long series of aggressions and invasions by Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon, which kept both nations in a constant state of apprehension, which induced their kings to lean for support, at one time on Egypt, at another on Assyria, which led to the repeated plundering of their cities, and to the devastation of their fields, to the captivity of Israel, and finally, after the lapse of 367 years, to

the capture of Jerusalem, the destruction of the temple, and the Babylonish captivity of Judah.

The first of these invasions, the expedition of Shishak or Sheshonk, king of Egypt, against Jerusalem, in the fifth year of Rehoboam, (1 Kings xiv. 25-28,) in which he plundered the temple, is the subject of an inscription on the outside of the great temple of Karnac, and in the list of captured districts and cities is found the name of the "kingdom of Judah." This is the earliest clear and undoubted mention of the Jews which has as yet been found on the monuments of Egypt.

The subsequent events which brought the Israelites and Jews into contact with the Egyptians, are so interwoven with Assyrian history, that it is perhaps better to consider them in the order of their occurrence, while following the story of the latter country.

The empire of Assyria first rose into importance about B.C. 1273. Founded during the primeval ages of mankind, when out of the land of Shinar "went forth Asshur and builded Nineveh,"* and "Calah and Resen," its Semitic people continued for a long period subordinate to the southern power, whether Hamitic Chaldæans, Elamites, or Arabs, whose chief city was Babylon. The seat of Assyrian government in those early times was at Asshur, (now Kileh Shergat,) and Nineveh the older city, and in after times the capital of the empire, occupied a position of minor importance. The greatness and splendour of

* "The city Rehoboth," (Gen. x. 11,) translated in the margin "The streets of the city," was probably not a distinct place.

Nineveh are often referred to in Scripture, (Jonah i. 2, iv. 11; Nahum ii. 9, iii. 1, 2; Zeph. ii. 15,) and the remains discovered by Layard, M. Botta, and others, have enabled us to appreciate the luxury and magnificence of the ancient capital.

Six hundred and twenty-five years before the Christian era, Nineveh the great fell, involving all her provincial cities in her ruin, and huge mounds of earth alone remained to mark the site of these great towns; their very position was forgotten, until the recent explorations of Layard and his followers brought to light the long-buried memorials of the once dominant power of Asia. A list of most of the great Assyrian kings has been recovered from the monuments, with many interesting records of their buildings, wars, and conquests. But a considerable period in their history elapses before we meet with any incident connecting them with Palestine. We do find, however, (as previously mentioned,) that the Assyrian kings contemporary with David and Solomon were content to busy themselves in building and repairing their temples and palaces; and the account which their own records give of the state of the Assyrians and Babylonians is quite consistent with the statement that the empire of Solomon extended to the river Euphrates.

Very different, however, was the relative position of the two nations in after days, when, for their sins, the "Lord began to cut Israel short," and when the warlike monarchs who ruled over Assyria made themselves lords paramount over Asia, and when Assyria

contested with Egypt the possession of Syria and Palestine, the last fragments of the empire of Solomon. Of this period very many and very interesting records are found in the inscriptions ; and in fact, very few events are mentioned in Scripture in connexion with Assyria, but there is found a corresponding notice on the monuments.

The first Assyrian king whose records connect him with Palestine is Shalmaneser. He states that in the sixth, eleventh, and fourteenth years of his reign he fought three battles with Benhadad, king of Damascus, who was in league with the people of Hamath, the Hittites, and the Phoenicians, and that he defeated them, destroying in one battle 20,000 men. Again, in his eighteenth year, he tells us that he fought against Hazael, king of Damascus, and killed 16,000 men, and captured 1100 chariots. He records also that he took tribute from Jehu—a fact not mentioned in Scripture, but it seems not improbable that this tribute and allegiance given to the Assyrians was the cause of the fierce attack which Hazael made on Jehu, (2 Kings x. 32, 33.)

In the inscriptions of Shalmaneser we find the names of the kings of Syria, which are mentioned in Scripture, correctly given, and also the name of the king of Israel ; we find, too, that the Assyrians attached much importance to the possession of Hamath, and a similar view is often expressed in Scripture, as in Judges iii. 3, where, as the key of the country, it is called the “entering in of Hamath.” He mentions also twelve kings of the Hittites, and specially notices

their chariots, (see 1 Kings x. 29,) as well as the chariots of the Syrians.

This seems to have been the first occasion on which the Assyrians were brought into contact with the people of the kingdom of Israel.

The next Assyrian king to be noticed is named in the Hebrew, Pul, in the Greek, Phaloch, (2 Kings xv. 19;) and his name has been read on the monuments as Vul-lush, but the pronunciation seems doubtful. Very few of the inscriptions of this king have been recovered, but in one of them he records the receipt of tribute from Tyre, Sidon, Damascus, and Samaria, and also states that he took Damascus. At the termination of the reign of this king, there seems to have been a revolution of some kind in the country, which resulted in a change of dynasty; and about B.C. 747, Tiglath Pileser II. ascended the Assyrian throne. Many of the inscriptions of this king have been interpreted. He mentions the expedition which he made into Palestine, when he came up at the invitation of Ahaz, (2 Kings xvi. 7,) and that he took Damascus, and slew Rezin its king. The interview which Ahaz had with Tiglath Pileser at Damascus was probably the first meeting of the people of the kingdom of Judah with the Assyrians. Tiglath Pileser also mentions his capture of Sepharvaim or Sipparah.

The records of Shalmaneser II., the probable successor of Tiglath Pileser, are so few and so much defaced that they are supposed to have been purposely destroyed by one of his successors. There are, however, two broken tablets from which the Assyrian

king's name is lost, and which probably belong to Shalmaneser; one of which mentions "Hosea, king of Samaria," and the other, a son of Rezin, king of Damascus. These tablets no doubt refer to the expedition recorded in 2 Kings xvii. 3, 4.

The name of the Assyrian king who finally captured Samaria after the three years' siege is not mentioned in Scripture, (2 Kings xvii. 5, 6;) and we learn from the inscriptions that the siege which had been commenced by Shalmaneser, was concluded by his successor Sargon, who, in his records, states that he took Samaria in his first year, and carried into captivity 27,280 families. He mentions also that Samaria revolted from him the next year, and that he overran Palestine again, when he found Gaza and other cities of the Philistines in the hands of the Egyptians, an event which is believed to be referred to in Isa. xix. 18. In another expedition Sargon states that he placed a colony of Arabs in Samaria, (see Neh. ii. 19, iv. 7, &c.,) and that he accepted the submission of the king of Egypt, whom he calls "Pirhu," a title which is evidently the same as the biblical Pharaoh. At a later period of his reign Sargon mentions that he took Ashdod, (see Isa. xx. 1,) claiming, as was the custom of eastern kings, the honour of the capture for himself, without mention of his Tartan or general.

The power of the Egyptians seems at this time to have been broken by repeated reverses, but they still, occasionally, attempted to regain their supremacy, endeavouring especially to seduce the subject-kings of Judæa and other countries from their allegiance to

Assyria, in which they seem sometimes to have succeeded, but only to subject themselves to heavy retribution, and in the end to draw down on his faithless dependents the vengeance of the Assyrian king.

Sargon was succeeded by his son Sennacherib, whose name is so famous in Bible story. He records an expedition to Palestine, in which he took Sidon, Ascalon, Hazor, and Joppa, and compelled tribute from other Phœnecian cities and from Edom. He fought a battle with the Egyptians at Lachish, and, as the fruits of victory, took the cities of Lachish and Libuah. This expedition was evidently produced by an Egyptian reaction, (see 2 Kings xviii. 21;) and by Sennacherib's account, Hezekiah, king of Jerusalem, had listened to them; for he says that the people of Ekron had deposed their king, who was faithful to Assyria, and had sent him prisoner to Hezekiah. Whereupon Sennacherib came up against Judæa, and took forty-six fenced cities, carrying off 200,000 captives, (2 Kings xviii. 13.) He besieged Jerusalem and endeavoured to take it by means of "mounds." (See 2 Kings xix. 32.) Hezekiah, however, submitted, (evidently feeling himself in the wrong, "I have offended," says he, 2 Kings xviii. 14.) and paid as tribute three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold, besides other rich "presents," (2 Kings xviii. 14.) Sennacherib also states that he restored the king of Ekron, and deprived Hezekiah of part of his dominions, which he bestowed on the kings of Ekron, Ashdod, and Gaza.

The agreement between these annals of Sennacherib

and the Bible story is very remarkable, and must bring prominently before us the spirit in which the two records were written. Sennacherib inscribed these events on his palace walls in proud commemoration of an unbroken career of success. The Bible historian recorded them because, though eminently disastrous to his nation, they were true.

None of the annals of Sennacherib have yet been found later than the sixth year of his reign ; that they may one day be brought to light is probable ; but if it should be so, it is not at all to be expected that any account will be seen of the terrible disaster which befel him in his second expedition, when the "angel of the Lord went out and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred and fourscore and five thousand." Such a record, though true enough, would ill become the walls of the palace-hall where the great king received the homage of his subjects and of the ambassadors of dependent kings. There is, however, a very remarkable passage in the Greek historian Herodotus,* who, when in Egypt, was told by the priests of a miraculous defeat sustained by Sennacherib when on the eve of attacking Egypt, and which, it is probable, is a distorted account of that wonderful event.

"Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia," mentioned in 2 Kings xix. 9 as threatening an attack on Sennacherib, is found from the Egyptian records to have been one of a dynasty of Ethiopians who succeeded in establishing their rule over Egypt; and it seems that Tirhakah,

* Herodotus ii. 141.

by his warlike genius and activity, did much to restore the declining power of Egypt. It is evident from the Scripture account, that the rumoured approach of Tirhakah caused Sennacherib to call in all his detachments, and concentrate his forces as if to meet a formidable foe.

The story of the dealings of Sennacherib with King Hezekiah is given in the Bible with unusual detail in 2 Kings xviii. and xix., and in Isaiah xxxvi. and xxxvii., and many parts of it are very curiously illustrated by the Assyrian sculptures and inscriptions. We have seen how well-founded was Rab-shakeh's accusation, (xviii. 21,) that Hezekiah trusted "on the staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt, on which if a man lean, it will go into his hand and pierce him;" and the allegation that "so is Pharaoh, king of Egypt, unto all that trust in him," is abundantly proved to be true from the history of the period. The reference to horses and chariots, (xviii. 23,) is characteristic, as cavalry and chariots formed the great strength of the Assyrian armies, and the king is rarely seen in the sculptures but in a chariot.

It appears from the inscriptions that the Assyrians were in the habit of extending the worship of their own idols in all the countries which they subdued, and also of carrying to their own native temples the idols of such foreign nations as came under the Assyrian yoke. A knowledge of this custom gives point to the question, "*Where* are the gods of Hamath, and of Arpad? where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah?" (2 Kings xviii. 34.)—the answer to the

question being, that the idols of these cities were exhibited as trophies in the temples of Nineveh, as the Jews no doubt well knew. The capture of all the cities named by Rab-shakeh is mentioned on the inscriptions.

Again, on the Assyrian sculptures we see in several instances prisoners led up to the king for sentence, by a ring or hook passed through the lips or nose;* and to those who had seen such scenes enacted, there must have been a terrible significance in the reply which the prophet was commissioned to give, (2 Kings xix. 28, and Isa. xxxvii. 29,) "*I will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips.*"

Sennacherib also expressly states that on his first attack he attempted to take Jerusalem by means of mounds, which rendered the promise of the Lord peculiarly applicable, that he should not "cast a bank" against the city, (2 Kings xix. 32.)

The reference, too, to cutting down the "tall cedars and the choice fir-trees" of Lebanon, is in complete accordance with the common practices of the Assyrian kings. Assyria produced but little timber suitable for their buildings, and the kings seem even to have undertaken expeditions with the sole purpose of obtaining choice timber.

The modes of attack on fortified cities mentioned in Isaiah's message as adopted by the Assyrians—the

* Two plates from sculptures representing this practice are given in Rawlinson's "Five Great Monarchies,"—one representing captives of Sargon, (vol. i. 304,) the other of more uncertain date, (vol. iii. 436.)

arrow, the shield, and the bank—are very frequently depicted on the monuments. In all the sculptures of such scenes, warriors are seen protected by huge shields, six or seven feet high, and curved over the head and round the body, in such a way as to form the half of a small hut. Planting these shields against the base of the walls and towers, the soldiers use the pick and lever. Others heap up mounds of earth, on which to plant machines; and the bow-men keep up a constant shower of arrows against the defenders.* The prophet Habakkuk refers to the use of these mounds by the later Babylonians, (i. 10,) “They shall deride every stronghold; for they shall heap dust, and take it.”

The three persons sent by Sennacherib to Hezekiah are named by their official titles, Tartan being equivalent to general, Rab-shakeh to chief cupbearer, and Rabsaris to chief of the eunuchs.

No record of the latter part of the reign of Sennacherib has been recovered, nor any account of the end of his life. The monuments, however, inform us that Esar-haddon, who succeeded him, was not his eldest son.

Of the reign of this Esar-haddon very little is known. In one inscription he mentions Manasseh, king of Judah, as one of the kings who supplied him with workmen to assist in the erection and decoration of a palace.

* The Assyrian bow is seen, in numerous sculptures, to have been about four feet long, and drawn to the breast, not to the ear, as was the English long-bow.

Esar-haddon is found to have reigned personally at Babylon, probably dividing his time between that city and Nineveh, instead of appointing a viceroy, as those of his predecessors who ruled over Babylonia had done; and this fact explains the apparent anomaly of a king of Assyria carrying his prisoner to Babylon, three hundred miles from his own capital city, (2 Chron. xxxiii. 11.)

No Assyrian record of the captivity of Manasseh has as yet been discovered.

Esar-haddon was succeeded by his son Asshur-bani-pal, (the Sardanapalus of the Greeks,) who, though as warlike as any of the kings of Assyria, does not seem to have been brought into contact with the Jews. Perhaps it may be that, warned by former calamities, they remained faithful to their Assyrian allegiance,* and so escaped the chastisement which fell on their neighbours; for we find that Asshur-bani-pal attacked and defeated Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia, who was supreme in Egypt, exacted tribute from the king of Tyre, made war on the Arabs, took Petra and other towns, and finally defeated the Arabs with great slaughter near Damascus.

With Asshur-bani-pal ended the glory of Assyria. His son Saracus, who succeeded him, had reigned fifteen years when Assyria was attacked by the Medes, who were rising into power, and subsequently by the Scythians, who devastated the country, and greatly weakened the Assyrian power. On the retreat of the

* The subsequent conduct of Josiah seems to render this probable.

Scythians, the Medes renewed their attack, under Cyaxares, who formed an alliance with the Susianians to the south. Saracus detached part of his army southwards, under a general named Nabopolassar, against the Susianians, retaining the main body to resist the Medes. Nabopolassar, however, revolted, and concluded an alliance with Cyaxares, whose daughter he obtained in marriage for his own son, Nebuchadnezzar. Under the conjoint attack of the rebels and the Medes, Nineveh fell, B.C. 625. And it is said, that when, by a rise in the river, (see Nahum i. 8,) part of the city wall was destroyed, Saracus, in despair, set fire to his palace, and perished in the flames.

Thus fell the great Assyrian empire, and its great capital, as had been foretold by the Hebrew prophets, (see Isa. x. 5-25; Nahum i. ii. iii.) She is "empty, void, and waste," and an "utter end has been made of the place thereof." For centuries the very site where the city had stood was unknown, and yet the mounds which have been cast on her have given up, in God's good time, their long-buried testimony to the minute accuracy of the Hebrew historians.

Babylon had for centuries been a dependency of the Assyrian empire, occasionally struggling into partial freedom, but at all times overshadowed by the greatness of her northern neighbour. Frequently in rebellion, and as often subdued, frequently casting about to form confederacies against Assyria (as no doubt Berodach-baladan did when he sent his embassy to Hezekiah with letters and a present,

2 Kings xx. 12,) Babylon enjoyed, during the existence of the Assyrian empire, but the shadow of her former importance.

After the destruction of Nineveh, Babylon was chosen by Nabopolassar, in the division of the spoils of victory between him and Cyaxares, and once more became the seat of the power, supreme over all the countries round the two great rivers, Tigris and Euphrates, and in this position Babylon speedily assumed an importance and splendour beyond all cities of the world.

The close alliance which Nabopolassar, the first king of the new dynasty, or "Later Babylonian Empire," had made with the Medes, (whose power had begun to be of importance,) freed him from fears of enemies at home, and gave him probably the assistance of Median troops in his own armies, to enable him to deal with the remoter provinces of Assyria, which had fallen to his lot. Soon after the fall of Assyria, as might be expected, from what we have seen of the political state of Asia at the period, Egypt made an attempt to repossess herself of Palestine and the adjoining countries. A period of eighteen years of peace seems to have followed the fall of Assyria, during which time Psammuticus, an old and experienced king, ruled Egypt; but on his death his son and successor, Neco, pushed forward his armies into Palestine. Josiah, the good king of Judah, faithful to his allegiance, led out his troops to oppose the Egyptians, (2 Kings xxiii. 29, 30,) but was killed in the battle which took place at Megiddo. This Egyptian victory was related by the priests of Egypt to Herodotus the

Greek, and they mentioned also the capture of "Cadytis, a large city of Syria,"* (which was perhaps Jerusalem, known as "Kadesh," or "Cadusha," "The Holy,"†) 2 Kings xxiii. 33-36; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 3, 4; but the priests said nothing of Neco's subsequent reverses.

The inscriptions of the Babylonian empire which have been discovered are very scanty in comparison with the Assyrian remains, and but little would be known of the great monarchs of Babylon, apart from their buildings, were it not for some fragments of native historians, which have been preserved in Greek and Latin writers. The greater part of the inscriptions which have been preserved are in commemoration of great buildings erected by their authors.

Nabopolassar, it seems, sent an army, under the command of his son Nebuchadnezzar, against the Egyptians; and Neco, defeated in one great battle, lost all his Syrian acquisitions, (2 Kings xxiv. 7; see Jer. xlvi. 2, 26.) This battle is recorded by Berosus, the Babylonian historian, who relates that, soon after the battle, Nebuchadnezzar received tidings of the death of Nabopolassar, and that he returned hastily, with some light troops, by the short route across the desert, so as to secure his succession, leaving his

* Her. ii. 159. Neco was the king who commenced the canal from the Mediterranean to the Red Sea, part of which (four miles) has been actually used by M. De Lesseps in his recent attempt to connect the two seas. See Herodotus ii. 158, and an article in *Cornhill Magazine*, March 1866, p. 381.

† Sir G. Wilkinson seems to incline to the opinion that the Cadytis taken by Neco was Jerusalem.

main army and prisoners to follow by the usual course down the river.

A few years later, a great rebellion broke out in Syria. The city of Tyre, and the whole of Phœnicia and Judæa, threw off the Babylonian yoke. Jehoia-kin, whose father had been placed on the throne by Neco, no doubt on account of his Egyptian leaning, probably wanted but little persuasion to assist in the revolution.

Nebuchadnezzar lost no time in proceeding to Palestine with an army, which is said to have consisted of 10,000 chariots, 120,000 horse, and 180,000 infantry,* and to have been composed both of his own troops and of levies furnished by his allies the Medes.

The mixed character of Nebuchadnezzar's army is particularly noticed in Scripture, (2 Kings xxiv. 2 ;) and it is to be observed that, as in former places the "Assyrians" only are mentioned as the invaders, so in the Assyrian inscriptions we have no mention of any but native Assyrians as employed in their armies.

Nebuchadnezzar besieged Tyre, and marched against Jerusalem, which submitted, (2 Kings xxiv. 12 ;) but the siege of Tyre is stated by its native historian to have lasted thirteen years. The final fall of Jerusalem and captivity of the Jews is not recorded in such annals of Nebuchadnezzar as have been discovered.

With the fall of Jerusalem, and destruction of the first temple, B.C. 588, ends the continuous history of the Jews as recorded in the canonical books of the

* The authority for these numbers is Polyhistor.

Old Testament. The histories of the apocryphal books are of course interesting, but have been pronounced to be of no real authority. The fragmentary histories of Ezra and Nehemiah embrace but short periods, and refer to incidents which the few remaining Persian inscriptions do not mention ; but in the book of Daniel we have a record of some remarkable events in Babylonian history, subsequent to the captivity of Judah, and the monuments illustrate very strikingly the intimate acquaintance of Daniel with all the manners and customs of the Babylonians.

Having been carried to Babylon, Daniel was selected as one of the youths who were to receive their education in the royal establishment, and he thus enjoyed opportunities of obtaining the best information and from the highest sources. There is hardly any part of the Bible which has been more cavilled at by so-called "critics," nor is there any part capable of more complete and triumphant vindication than the book of Daniel.

The difficulties which once existed in reconciling the historical facts mentioned by Daniel with the accounts of other historians, have been in most instances removed in a manner equally unexpected and convincing. And the references to the habits and manners of the Babylonians, and to the character of their princes, which are scattered through the book of Daniel, can now be proved to be the result of long and intimate acquaintance.

The custom of assigning a daily portion of food to favoured individuals (Dan. i. 5) was common in

Babylonia, as well as among the Assyrians and Persians.

The learning and tongue of the Chaldæans are specially mentioned, (Dan. i. 4, 20, ii. 2, 10, 48, iv. 7.) And we find that the name "Chaldæan," used by foreigners to designate the whole people of Babylonia, (as in the book of Kings, 2 Kings xxv. 45, and in the books of those of the prophets who had not visited Babylonia, Hab. i. 6,) was used by the Babylonians as the name of the learned caste or tribe who were especially devoted to astronomical and perhaps astrological pursuits, and who employed in their pursuits the ancient "Hamitic" language of old Chaldæa,* a language quite unintelligible to the ordinary Babylonians of Nebuchadnezzar's time, who spoke a language of quite a different family, nearly allied to the Semitic Hebrew. In this latter language Dāniel of course needed little instruction.

It is noticed (Dan. ii. 4) that the Chaldæans spoke to the king in "Syriac," and not in their own learned language, which probably Nebuchadnezzar did not understand.

The "image of gold" which the king set up, is in perfect keeping with all we know of Babylonian worship. The profuse employment of gold in the decoration of temples is mentioned in histories, and in the inscriptions, and more than one colossal golden idol is recorded as having existed in Babylon.

* Compare with this the long period in which the Norman-French lingered in our own law courts, after English was spoken by all classes, and the use even to this day of the Latin.

The speech of King Nebuchadnezzar, given in Dan. iv. 30, is most wonderfully in accordance with his words in the inscriptions which he set up, and which have recently been discovered and translated. The greatness of Babylon—that he had built it up “by the might of his power and for the honour of his majesty”—are the topics constantly selected by Nebuchadnezzar for commemoration ; and every brick, in all the millions used in his edifices, is stamped with his name and titles. In his Standard inscription (of which there are several copies existing, the most perfect being in the India-house Museum) the king gives an account of his great buildings, and a few expressions selected from Sir H. Rawlinson’s translation will show the spirit in which it was written. King Nebuchadnezzar says, “The great double wall of Babylon I finished ; I built the sides of the ditch.” “In Babylon, the city which is the delight of my eyes, and which I have glorified,” . . . “silver and gold and precious stones.” . . . “I stored up inside, and placed there the treasure-house of my kingdom.”

In fact the speech in the book of Daniel is almost a condensed and miniature report of the boastful inscriptions and records of the king himself, and it is not in the power of language to give a more perfect representation of the character of the man.

It is the constant language of all explorers in Babylonia, that the remains of the enormous edifices raised by Nebuchadnezzar prove that he had at command an almost unlimited amount of “naked human strength”—that he had swept off the wretched peoples of the

countries he invaded, and that he worked them mercilessly on his buildings. And this was probably in the mind of the prophet, when (Dan. iv. 27) he advised him "to break off his sins by righteousness, and his iniquities by *showing mercy to the poor.*"

But perhaps the most remarkable illustration of Scripture history which has as yet been discovered is a record by King Nebuchadnezzar in his inscriptions, which can hardly refer to anything but to the terrible affliction which was sent to humble his pride, (Dan. iv. ;) and it is remarkable that in this chapter Nebuchadnezzar is represented as the speaker. In his inscription he states that for some years "the seat of his kingdom did not rejoice his heart ;" that he "did not build, did not lay up treasures," &c., &c. ; and after a long statement to this effect, the king proceeds to speak of and enumerate the buildings which he erected at a subsequent period. It must have been indeed a remarkable and widely-known misfortune to which a reference so public was made, by a king so great and proud as Nebuchadnezzar.

The numerous musical instruments incidentally mentioned by Daniel in his account of the golden image are represented in very many sculptures, Assyrian and Babylonian. The customs of the Babylonians were almost identical with those of the Assyrians, owing to the long connexion between the two peoples ; and no doubt, after the destruction of Assyria, Nebuchadnezzar, himself born an Assyrian prince, removed a large number of Assyrians to Babylon, besides the army which revolted with him.

The genius, greatness, and power of Nebuchadnezzar find abundant testimony in the ruins of his buildings and the records of his achievements ; and the words of the prophet, "Thou, O king, art a king of kings, for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, and strength, and power, and glory," (Dan. ii. 37,) were no mere flatteries, but words of truth and soberness, addressed to one whom God himself symbolised by "the head of gold."

It may be noticed in such inscriptions of Nebuchadnezzar as have been discovered, that, both before and after his loss and recovery of empire, he does not mention the one true God, whom he was brought at times partially to acknowledge.

In the book of Daniel, too, we cannot fail to remark how soon the impression made on the king wears out, and in his best moments Nebuchadnezzar seems inclined to accord to Jehovah at most only a sort of pre-eminence among the idols of the nation, as "the high God," (Dan. iv. 2.) "Belteshazzar, according to the name of *my God*, and in whom is the spirit of the *holy gods*," (Dan. iv. 8 ;) and again, "Because there is *no other God that can deliver after this sort*," (Dan. iii. 29.)

The might of this Babylonian empire was foretold in a most remarkable prophecy by Habakkuk (i. 6-11.) The character of the troops, their fierceness, mode of attack on cities, and their successes are all glanced at ; and the expressions in verse 11 seem to imply that, in "attributing his power unto *his god*," Nebuchadnezzar lapsed from a better knowledge and belief. (See also Dan. v. 20.)

The exact and literal accomplishment of the prophecies of Daniel (as of all the prophecies of Scripture) is beyond the scope of these notes ; but it may not be improper to observe, with reference to the "stone cut out without hands," that the Roman power culminated at the period of the birth of Christ: the first blow which seriously affected the dominion of the "iron kingdom"—the defeat of Varus by Arminius, or Herman, ("the war man,") and his Germans—was struck about A.D. 9, when our Lord, after astonishing the doctors at His understanding and answers, was at Nazareth, subject to His parents, increasing in wisdom and stature, and about to commence His public mission. Varus, the Roman general, had preceded Cyrenius as governor of Syria, (Luke ii. 2,) and was sent to command in Germany, with three legions. The name of Varus must have been familiar to the Jews, and his misfortunes could not have been unknown to them. His defeat was total, and his legions were exterminated. "Every ancient writer who alludes to the overthrow of Varus, attests the importance of the blow and the bitterness with which it was felt."*

Nebuchadnezzar reigned in all forty-three years, and was succeeded by his son Evil-merodach, or Aulmerodach, who is mentioned in Scripture only (2 Kings xxv. 27-30) as having shown kindness to Jehoiachin in his captivity. After a reign of only two years this king was succeeded by Neriglissar, or Nergal-shar-uzur, who is not mentioned in the Bible history as king, but who was probably the Nergal-sharezer

* Professor Creasy's "Fifteen Decisive Battles."

who accompanied Nebuchadnezzar to Jerusalem, (Jer. xxxix. 3-13.) He is there called Rab-mag, a title which he bears on the monuments, and which probably means "chief priest." He, after a short reign of four years, was succeeded by his son Laborosochod, who, in less than a year, fell a victim to a conspiracy, one of the conspirators, Nabu-nahit, or Nabonadius, mounting the throne. Nabonadius was the last king of Babylon, which, in his reign, was taken by Cyrus the Great.

The inscriptions have thrown a most important light on the history of the fall of Babylon, as recorded by Daniel. He names Belshazzar as king of Babylon, and states that the king was killed by the Persians on the night of the successful assault; whereas, all other historians agree in calling the king Nabonadius, and in stating that he lived for some years as the prisoner of Cyrus. The inscriptions, however, clear up this difficulty by informing us that Nabonadius associated his son, whose name is read as Bel-shar-uzur, with him in the government, and he is therefore correctly termed "Belshazzar the king." It seems also probable that the mother of Belshazzar was a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar. It is almost certain, from what we know of oriental customs, that the "queen" who came into the banqueting-house, (Dan. v. 10,) and spoke so boldly to Belshazzar, must have been his mother, not his wife; and when she spoke of "Nebuchadnezzar thy father," she used the word "father" for grandfather, as is constantly done in Hebrew and other Semitic languages. In fact, in Hebrew the words

"father" and "son" imply only ancestor and descendant, as, for instance, "We have Abraham to our father," and "the son of David."

It has also been pointed out, in confirmation of these facts, that Daniel, after his interpretation of the writing on the wall, was proclaimed *third* ruler in the kingdom,* instead of second, as would have been the case had there been but one king.

It seems also, that on the approach of Cyrus with the Persian and Median army, Nabonadius marched out to meet him, and was beaten in battle, after which he retreated to Borsippa, a strong town some ten miles from Babylon, leaving Belshazzar to defend the capital.

In the year B.C. 538, Cyrus took great Babylon under the exact circumstances which had been foretold by the prophets of the Lord.

It is still uncertain who "Darius the Mede" was, whom Cyrus made viceroy over Babylon, (Dan. v. 31 and ix. 1.) The expressions "took the kingdom" and "was made king," imply that he received his authority from another; and the name Ahasuerus ("son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes") seems to be the nearest Hebrew form of the Persian word Khshayathiya—"the king." Future discoveries will probably throw light on this difficulty; and, in the meantime, the proofs we have of the accuracy of the book of Daniel in other particulars, render it easy to put faith in it in this instance. It has been conjectured that, as Darius is particularly described as the "Mede," not the Persian, he was a son or connexion of Astyages,

* Pr. Rawlinson's "Bampton Lectures for 1862."

the deposed king of the Medes. The term king is frequently used in Scripture for a viceroy or subordinate king.

The destruction of the great empire of Babylon gave the captive Jews into the hands of the Persians. God was about to restore His people to their own land, and, in His long-suffering and mercy, to give them a new trial. By idolatry and rebellion against their God the Jews had lost, first, the high place among the nations of the world which had been given them under David and Solomon; and finally, when warning and even entreaty had proved useless, their city, their temple, and their beloved land of promise. Their next trial was to offer them blessings of a much higher order, with the alternative of punishment of greater severity than any they had undergone—punishment which the world still looks on.

The religion professed by the Persians in the time of Cyrus was purer than that of any nation, save the Jews. They believed in one only and supreme God, the Author of all good; and also in an evil spirit, the antagonist of the good. The Persians had a horror of all idolatries; the iconoclastic spirit of the nation was particularly remarkable during Xerxes' * invasion of Greece; and the Persians were therefore likely to be well inclined towards an oppressed people, whose

* See Herodotus, book viii. Xerxes, on the capture of Athens, caused the Athenian exiles in his camp to offer sacrifices after the manner of their country, but did not direct the Persians to join them. See also Rawlinson's "Five Great Monarchies," vol. iii. ch. 4.

religious belief was somewhat like their own. The recorded words of the proclamation of Cyrus seem to bear out this view: "The Lord (Jehovah) God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth," (Ezra i. 2.) This fact may perhaps afford some reason for the peculiar favour with which Cyrus is mentioned in Scripture.

The records and remains of Persian dominion afford little information of the proceedings of the Jews at the time of and after their return ; and with the rebuilding of the Temple the Bible history ends, until the birth of Jesus Christ.

Two monuments illustrative of Jewish history remain to be noticed. The existence of the first rests on the testimony of three writers who state that there stood, in their day, in the city of Tigisis (Tangiers) pillars of stone, bearing an inscription in Phœnician letters :— "We are they who fled from the face of Joshua the robber, the son of Nun."

The chief authority for this, Procopius, who uses the language of an eye-witness, was in Africa with Belisarius, the general of Justinian, Emperor of Constantinople.

The last monument, and most melancholy record of Jewish history, is the arch of Titus at Rome. The history of the siege and destruction of Jerusalem is well known ; and the triumphal arch decreed to Titus by the senate of Rome is especially interesting from the sculpture representing the sacred vessels of the temple, as carried in triumph into Rome, and from the inscription which records that Titus had "subdued

the people of the Jews and razed their city Jerusalem." In the sculpture is represented the seven-branched candlesticks, the table of show-bread, and the silver trumpets, exactly as described in the book of Exodus. The arch still stands, though much damaged and defaced, and gives its final testimony to the correctness of the description of the sacred vessels. The ark of the covenant is not seen on the arch; and it is remarkable that there is no mention of the ark after the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. It is believed by most learned men that there was no ark of the covenant in the second temple.

The fate of these sacred utensils is perhaps not uninteresting.* Captured by Nebuchadnezzar, profaned by Belshazzar, restored by Cyrus, they were again taken by Titus, exhibited in his triumph at Rome, and there deposited in the temple of Peace. After the lapse of 400 years, Rome herself fell before Genseric, the fierce king of the Vandals, who transported the sacred vessels to Carthage. When the Vandalic kingdom of Carthage was destroyed by Belisarius, the vessels were again borne in triumph, into Constantinople, and were sent by the Emperor Justinian to the Christian Church at Jerusalem. It is impossible to trace their fate beyond this. Jerusalem has been trodden down by the Gentiles; Arabs, Greeks, Latins, and Turks, have taken and retaken the Holy City; but it seems probable that the sacred vessels finally disappeared when, in A.D. 614, Chosroes II., king of Persia, took and plundered Jerusalem, de-

* Reland "De Spoliis Templi," &c.

stroyed the churches and buildings, and carried captive vast numbers of the inhabitants. If this be true, it would be remarkable, that after the lapse of 1152 years, these sacred relics were destroyed by a successor of the Great Cyrus, by whom they had been rescued from the profanation of the Babylonians.

It is also remarkable that Chosroes seems to have captured the city, to a certain extent, in the interests of the Jews, as opposed to the Christians. He was assisted in the siege by 26,000 Jews, and appears to have favoured their nation, as did his great predecessor Cyrus.

Such is the language of the monuments. Such is the nature of the testimonies to the truth of Bible history by the relics of contemporary nations. Each year brings fresh evidence to light; and it is hardly too much to say, that the proofs of the exact truth of all the canonical historical books of the Bible are as strong as those of the Norman invasion of England, and of the battle of Hastings.

The ample and incontrovertible evidence to the same purpose, drawn from the exact and literal fulfilment of the numerous prophecies of Scripture, is clearly set forth in the admirable work of the Rev. Dr Keith on that subject; and the combined proofs must surely be irresistibly convincing to all but to those to whom God has sent a strong delusion that they should believe a lie.

AN EXPLANATION OF THE MEANING OF
SOME OF THE NAMES MENTIONED IN
SCRIPTURE,

Which, being derived from languages other than
Hebrew or Greek, are not translated in the
margin of our Bibles.

Abed-nego. Dan. i. 7.	Probably Abed-nebo—The servant of Nebo. <i>Semitic Babylonian.</i>
Amraphel. Gen. xiv. 1.	Compounded of the name Imra, (other wise Iva or Vul,) the Chaldee God of the Air.
Adrammelech. 2 Kings xix. 37.	"The king is glorious," or, "The king's glory." <i>Semitic Assyrian.</i>
Ahasuerus. Esth. iv. 6.	The Ahasuerus of Esther was probably the king called Xerxes by the Greeks. Xerxes = "King Seer." <i>Old Persian.</i>
Artaxerxes. Ez. iv. 7; Neh. ii. 1.	Probably king of kings, or, "warrior king." <i>Old Persian.</i>
Asenath. Gen. xli. 45.	(As-neith.) Belonging to Neith, (an Egyptian goddess.) <i>Egyptian.</i>
Belteshazzar. Dan. iv. 8.	"Bel guards secrets." <i>Semitic Babylonian.</i>
Chushan-rishathaim. Jud. iii. 10.	A word of uncertain meaning, con- jectured to be possibly an erroneous read- ing for Asshur-ris-Elm, king of Assy- ria, B.C. 1150. Asshur-ris-Elm—"Asshur is the head of the gods," or, "Asshur is high headed."

Chedorlaomer. Gen. xvi. 1.	"Servant of Lagamer," (an Elamite deity.) <i>Hamitic Chaldee.</i>
Darius. Ez. vi. 1.	Probably "The possessor." <i>Old Persian.</i>
Fsarhaddon. 2 Kings xix. 37.	Written on the monuments Asshur-akh-iddina—"Asshur has given a brother." <i>Assyrian.</i>
Moses.	(Mou-oshe.) "Saved from water." <i>Egyptian.</i>
Merodach-baladan. Isa. xxxix. 1.	Written on the monuments Marduk-bal-iddin—"Merodach has given a son." <i>Semitic Babylonian.</i>
Nebuchadnezzar. 2 Kings xxiv. 1.	Written on the monuments Nebu-kudurri-uzur—"Nebo protects the youth," or, "Nebo protects landmarks." <i>Semitic Babylonian.</i>
Nebuzar-adan. 2 Kings xxv. 8.	Written on the monuments Nebu-zir-iddin—"Nebo has given offspring." <i>Babylonian.</i>
Nergal-sharezer. Jer. xxxix. 3.	Nergal-shar-uzur — (Perhaps) "Nergal protects the king." <i>Babylonian.</i>
Pharaoh.	This word was a title rather than a name, like the words Emperor, Sultan, Pope, &c.—Ph'ra "The Sun," or, Ph'ouro "The King." <i>Egyptian.</i>
Potiphar, } Potiphara. } Gen. xxxix. 1, xli. 45.	Pete-ph'ra—"Belonging to the Sun." (A name common on the Egyptian monuments.)

Rab-shakeh. 2 Kings xviii. 17.	"Chief Cupbearer." <i>Assyrian.</i>
Rabsaris. 2 Kings xviii. 17.	"Chief Eunuch." <i>Assyrian.</i>
Rab-mag. Jer. xxxix. 13.	Probably "High Priest." <i>Assyrian.</i>
Sennacherib. 2 Kings xviii. 13.	Sin-akhi-irrib—Sin has multiplied brethren. <i>Assyrian.</i>
Sharezer. 2 Kings xix. 37.	"The king protects." <i>Assyrian.</i>
Sargon. Isa. xx. 1.	"The established king," or, "I am established king." <i>Assyrian.</i>
Samgar-nebo. Jer. xxxix. 3.	"He who is devoted to Nebo." <i>Babylonian.</i>
Tidal. Gen. xiv. 1.	"The great chief."
Tiglath-pileser. 2 Kings xv. 29.	Be worship given to Hercules. <i>Assyrian.</i>
Tartan. Isa. xx. 1.	"General," or "Commander-in-Chief." <i>Assyrian.</i>
Zaphnath Paaneah, or as LXX. Pson thom Phanech.	"The sustainer of the age." <i>Egyptian.</i>

LIST OF DEITIES WORSHIPPED IN CHALDÆA, ASSYRIA, AND BABYLONIA.

The religion of the ancient Chaldæans, Assyrians, and Babylonians was a pure idolatry; they worshipped very many deities, some of whom were personifications of the sun, moon, and planets. The divinities of the three nations were almost identical, and it would appear that each city or district felt at liberty to select one particular deity for its own especial worship.

There appears to be a trace of a purer worship which at one time prevailed in Chaldæa, in the name of a deity called in the Semitic Chaldæan *Il*, in the Hamitic dialect *Ra*. Of this deity little is known; and it seems to be the opinion of an eminent scholar* that the names indicate rather the abstract idea of a supreme God, than such a deity with particular functions as was represented by the other names. This name for the supreme Deity has descended to the Semitic languages of the present day, and its Hamitic equivalent, *Ra*, was used in Egypt for the sun god.

At the head of the Assyrian pantheon stood Asshur, who was probably the founder of the empire mentioned in Gen. x. 11.

The remaining deities were common to all three nations, and their worship seems to have begun be-

* Professor Rawlinson.

fore the time of Abraham, and to have lasted till the fall of Babylon.

Each of the first six deities seems to have been accompanied by a female form or "wife," and to have been connected in groups of three, while the remaining five represented the five great planets :—

Name of Deities.	Name of Female Form.	Equivalent in Classical Mythology.
<p><i>1st Triad.</i> Ana. Bil, Bel, or Enu, } or Bel-Nimrod. Hea, or Hoa.</p>	<p>Anat. Beltis. Davkina.</p>	<p>Pluto. Neptune.</p>
<p><i>2d Triad.</i> Sin, or Hurki. San, or Sansi. Vul, or Iva.</p>	<p>(The Great Lady.) Shamas. { Shala, or Tala, } or Gula.</p>	<p>(Moon God.) (Sun God.) (Air God) Jupiter.</p>
<p>Nin, or Ninip, or Bar. Merodach. Nergal. Ishtar, or Nana. Nebo.</p>	<p>Saturn, (or Hercules.) Jupiter. Mars. Venus (Astarte.) Mercury.</p>	

The worship of these deities seems, at any rate in later times, to have been conducted with great splendour. The Assyrians appear from their records to have zealously extended the worship of their tutelary deity Asshur wherever their armies spread, and the magnificence of the Babylonian temples is recorded in many histories. The remains of at least one of these great temples attests the correctness of the de-

scription—the “Birs Nîmrud”—which has been identified by Sir H. C. Rawlinson as the “Temple of the Seven Spheres,”* erected by Nebuchadnezzar at Borsippa, and which is particularly mentioned in his standard inscription.

It is probable that the Bel of the Chaldæans, Assyrians, and Babylonians, was the same as the Baal of the Phœnicians and Syrians, who was so often worshipped by the Jews. The worship of Baal seems to have spread over the greater part of the ancient world. His name was known not only in Mesopotamia and Syria, but at Carthage, whose two great generals were named Hannibal, (Baal's favour,) and Hasdrubal, (Baal's help;)+ and even in our own country, the name of the “Beltane,” or “Baal's fire,” has been handed down almost to our own times.

* Dr Keith, in his “Evidence of Prophecy,” writing before the date of the recent researches, has described the “Birs” as part of Babylon. He has thus unconsciously illustrated his own remarks on the complete destruction of Babylon, and the difficulty of identifying the various mounds of ruins.

+ Gesenius' Lexicon. Sir H. C. Rawlinson seems to doubt the identity of “Bel” and “Baal.”—Rawlinson's “Herodotus,” i. p. 256, note 8.

A FEW WORDS ON THE MOSAIC
ACCOUNT OF CREATION.

The record in the first chapter of the book of Genesis of the creation of the world is manifestly intended to teach us, rather *who* made all things, than the manner in which the creative power was exercised.

Man is gifted with intellect fit to discover much of the successive operations by which this universe was built up ; but who its great Author was, unaided intellect could never have attained to know.

Revelation has been given to tell man what he could not discover for himself ; and all within the comprehension of man's mind, in the visible creation, is allowed to speak for itself to his intellect.

A short account is, however, given of the order of creation, and given in words unmatched in majesty and sublimity.

Modern science has devoted itself to the study of geology, and has discovered that the rocks beneath our soil themselves bear records which can be interpreted into an account of creation ; and that the rock records, so far as the rocks can be reached and seen by man, can be read with an approach to certainty.

The two records by the same Divine Hand ought therefore to agree in all particulars, and the highest

and best authorities have conclusively proved that they do agree.

In the book of Moses we have first the statement of the stupendous fact, that "in the beginning *God* created the heavens and the earth," after which an indefinite period elapses, during which the earth was "without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep," after which "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters," and there came

On the first day—The creation of light.

On the second day—The separation of the waters of the clouds from the waters of the seas and oceans by means of the "firmament," or clear atmosphere.*

On the third day—The gathering of the waters, the appearance of dry land, and the creation of grass, and herbs, and trees.

On the fourth day—The two great lights set in the firmament, "to be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years."

On the fifth day—The creation, first of fish, then of fowl.

On the sixth day—The creation of beasts of the earth, and cattle, and finally of man.

* Much bad argument has been wasted on the literal meaning of the original Hebrew word translated "firmament." Moses was obliged, of course, to designate natural objects by the names in common use for them by the Jews. It was as though Moses had said, "What you call 'firmament,' whatever you suppose it to be, *God* made, and at this period of His great work." Moses could not coin new words, nor was it his mission to teach the Jews natural science.

Now the geologic record is found to agree with this detail most remarkably ; and whatever minor difficulties still exist, are undoubtedly due to the imperfect information which men have as yet been able to obtain from the "Stone Book."

It is clear that the history in the book of Genesis is given from a human point of view, and is designedly clear to human comprehension. It may probably be regarded as a concise account of the chief events which would most strongly have impressed a human spectator, could any such have witnessed the progress of creation. The evidence of the rocks has established the fact that there was a period when the earth was without either animal or vegetable life, surrounded by dense clouds, impenetrable by light—without form, and void. As by slow degrees these clouds condensed, *light* struggled through, and illuminated with a dull ray the rugged surface of the globe, and the end of the first "day" was reached.

The work of the second "day" was a continuation of the same process ; which ended in the condensation of the denser clouds, and in the lighter ones taking a higher position, leaving the clear air, the "firmament," between the waters. All the highest authorities in geology are agreed that from the "Rock Record" alone, and without regard to the statement of Moses, such must have been the state of our earth during the early periods of creation. The surface of the globe was then an almost unbroken space of ocean, (pierced by, here and there, rugged pinnacles of rock,) under which the sedimentary

rocks which form the basis of the greater part of our continents and islands were being formed, and the whole was surrounded by a thick cloudy garment, through which, indeed, a dim light penetrated, but which completely shut out the sight of sun, moon, and stars. Astronomers tell us that some of our planets have still a similar condition of atmosphere, and that from our earth only the surface of their clouds can be seen.

At the commencement of the third "day," land was upheaved in large continents from the bosom of the ocean, the waters gave place, and were gathered into seas and oceans, the face of the dry land became covered with herbage—rank, colourless vegetation, beautiful in form, but requiring the sun-ray to develop its beauty of colour, but growing in the profusion which has given us our plentiful coal mines.

The fourth "day" broke the cloudy envelope of our world, the glorious sun appeared, shining in the clear blue sky, followed, after his setting, by the moon, second only to him in splendour, and to the human eye emphatically marking this period of creation.

The fifth "day" ushered in the creation of fish, of the great sea and river monsters,* whose remains are seen in our museums; and subsequently of fowl, the various birds that "fly in the open firmament of heaven."

* Not "whales," properly so-called. The same Hebrew word is translated "serpent," Ex. vii. 9, 10, 12; "dragon," Deut. xxxiii. 32; Ps. xci. 13, and lxxiv. 13; Jer. li. 34; Ezra xxiv. 3.

The sixth "day" gave to the earth cattle, and the beasts of the earth, and last of all, man, made in God's own image, to have dominion over all God's works.

This order of creation given by Moses—fish, fowl, beasts, and lastly, man—has been abundantly proved to be in exact accordance with the geologic record; and it is specially to be observed that it is only within the last few years that science has been so far advanced as to be able to speak positively as to the order in which the various types of being were introduced, *as the prominent features* of the world, and to know also that (by the record of the "Stone Book") man is the latest of God's works.

An uninspired account of creation written even within the last hundred years, would have been as likely to place fish last as first, and would have been almost sure to invert, in some way, the true order of creation.

It is a remarkable fact that every pretended and false revelation has pledged itself to false scientific statements, (as the Koran and the sacred books of the Hindoos.) In the Bible alone can we find an account of creation, which, consistent with the highest state of true science, has not been above the comprehension of simple and unlearned men of every age.

Minor points may safely be neglected. What was intended by the "days" of creation has been frequently the subject of debate. But the great fact is clear and beyond dispute, that, in sublime and concise words, Moses has given a clear and true history of

the main incidents of creation, and that until within the last few years no uninspired human being could have known the facts which Moses wrote down more than three thousand years ago.

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE PRINCIPAL VERSIONS AND TRANSLATIONS OF THE BIBLE.

THE original languages in which the Bible has come down to us are the Hebrew (with a small mixture of what is called Chaldee) and Greek. The Old Testament, with the exception of some parts of the books of Daniel and Ezra, which are written in Chaldee, is in Hebrew.

The Hebrew tongue is well known as one of the most ancient of the Semitic family of languages. It is probable that the letters in which we find the Hebrew Bible now written are not the same as those originally in use, which were probably like the letters on the old Hebrew coins. The present letters are generally supposed to have been introduced by Ezra, after the return from the captivity.

The Chaldee is a dialect nearly allied to the Hebrew. It was formerly supposed to have been the language of Babylonia at the time of the captivity; but recent discoveries prove, from the evidence of the monuments, that the dialect used by the people of Babylonia was even more nearly allied to the Hebrew than is the so-called Chaldee. Still less was it the language of the Chaldeans, or learned caste of

Babylon, which was a relic of the early Chaldæan empire, and of an entirely distinct family of languages.

Biblical Chaldee was probably the language commonly spoken in northern Syria in the days of Daniel and Ezra.

The correctness of the printed Hebrew text has been ensured by the collation, or comparison, of an immense number of ancient manuscripts, but it is still not absolutely impossible that some errors may have occurred in copying, especially in names of foreigners, and in numbers, which, being expressed in the original by letters, and not by figures, are rendered liable to error by the near resemblance to each other of some of the Hebrew letters.

The manuscripts of the Old Testament were most carefully preserved by the Jews, and the greatest care and pains taken to guard against error or alteration.

An immense work, called the "Masora," was composed by them, in which all the variations, repetitions, and various readings of all the authentic manuscripts were recorded. Even the number of letters in each book of the Bible were counted, and the number of times that the same word occurs in the beginning, middle, or end of a verse. The amount of labour required for the completion of this work must have been enormous, and it must evidently have contributed to prevent alterations or corruptions of the sacred text. The "Masora" is believed to have been completed about the time of the Christian era.

Lists of words are found in Hebrew Bibles termed Keri and Kethiv, which are thus explained by a dis-

tinguished Hebrew scholar:—"When the Hebrew scribes met with a word irregular in any way, they did not erase or alter the letters in the text, which was that *written* (Kethiv,) but put the corrected letters in the margin, (or bottom of the *printed* page;) but they placed under the letters in the *text* the *vowel* points belonging to the word written in the margin, and pronounced the word accordingly in reading in public; this was called Keri, pronounced or spoken; as much as to say, 'Write as in the text, but pronounce according to the margin.' Transposition of letters, or when a letter has been placed at the end of one word instead of the beginning of the following word, or when two words are written as one, are indicated by the same mark."

In addition to the Holy Scriptures, the Jews possess two works called the "Talmud of Jerusalem," and the "Talmud of Babylon," which profess to contain the traditions of their nation. The "Talmud of Jerusalem" was probably completed about A.D. 300; it is composed of two parts, called Mishna and Gemara. The Jews value the Talmud much, but it contains little or nothing of interest to Christians.

Besides the original Hebrew, we have several ancient translations of the Old Testament, which are of great importance, both in proving what was the state of the Hebrew text in very early times, and also in what way difficult passages and obscure phrases were understood when the Hebrew was, or had not long ceased to be, a living language.

The earliest and most valuable of these is the

Greek version, usually known as the Septuagint, or the translation of the seventy, generally referred to in writing as LXX., on account of the Jewish tradition which assigns that number of learned Hebrews as its authors. The translation is said to have been made for Ptolemy Philadelphus, a Greek king of Egypt, who lived about B.C. 280.

It is, however, doubtful whether the Greek version we possess is entirely of this old date, or whether the genuine Septuagint embraces only the Pentateuch and some few other parts ; but whether this be so or not, the so-called Septuagint is, after the Hebrew, by far the most ancient, best, and most important version of the Old Testament.*

The Syriac translation, in the language commonly used in Palestine about the time of our Saviour, is supposed to have been made about A.D. 100 ; it is a most valuable work, and has been carefully studied by learned men, and compared with other versions.

There are several ancient Greek translations of the Bible of later date than the Septuagint ; of these the most important are the versions of Acquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus.

Acquila is believed to have been employed by the Roman emperor Adrian in building the town called

* The importance of this early Greek translation of Holy Scripture can hardly be over-estimated, when it is remembered that the conquests and colonies of Alexander the Great had spread a knowledge of the Greek language over so many countries. The LXX. translation probably contributed powerfully to the rapid spread of Christianity.

"Ælia" on the site of Jerusalem, which was done about B.C. 134. Aquila became a Christian; but being addicted to astrology, was excommunicated, and thereupon renounced Christianity and professed Judaism. His translation is chiefly remarkable for his attempt to render the prophecies in such language as would pervert their application to our Saviour.

Theodotion was a native of Pontus in Asia Minor; he lived about A.D. 175; he became a Christian, but adhered to a heretical sect called Marcionites, and afterwards lapsed to Judaism. His translation was made, it is said, chiefly in opposition to the Marcionites. Theodotion's version has been lost, with the exception of the book of Daniel (which is generally used instead of the LXX. Daniel) and of some fragments.

Symmachus lived at the end of the first century A.D. He was a learned Samaritan, who became first a Jew and subsequently a Christian, and joined the sect of the Ebionites. His translation was made with the intention of distorting the meaning of the prophecies, so as to support the views of the Ebionite heretics, who acknowledged Jesus Christ to be the Messiah, but denied His divinity. His version was rather a paraphrase than a translation.

The Pentateuch exists also in the Phœnician, Samaritan, or most ancient Hebrew characters, with a translation also into the Samaritan language—a corrupt dialect of the Hebrew. The antiquity of this transcript has been a subject of dispute among the learned, some of whom believe it to be as old as the

time when the king of Assyria sent one of the Jewish priests to teach the people from Babylon, Cutha, Ava, Hamath, and Sepharvaim, whom he had placed in Samaria, "the manner of the god of the land," (2 Kings xvii. 24-28.) The date seems uncertain ; but both the transcript and translation are of much importance, because the enmity existing between the Jews and Samaritans renders it impossible that the agreement between the Hebrew and Samaritan copies can be due to anything but fidelity to a common original.

Of the Latin translations the earliest is that known as the "Italic" or the "ancient" version. The date is uncertain ; but it was probably made soon after the Christian era, and possibly in apostolic times. Another Latin translation of rather later date, revised and finished by Jerome, is usually known as the "Vulgate," and was the only Bible in common use during the middle ages.

The whole of the original which we possess of the New Testament is in Greek. It is believed by some that the Gospel of St Matthew was originally written in the Syriac language in Hebrew letters. It is certain, even if this be so, that its translation into Greek was very early, and was acknowledged as authentic at a very early date.

It has been asserted that the Gospel of St Mark, which was written at Rome, was originally in Latin, but there is little or no proof of this, and the best authorities agree in considering the Greek to be the only original.

The other Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles, and the book of Revelation, were all written in Greek. There is, however, a Syriac version of the Epistle to the Hebrews, which some have considered the original.

An immense number of translations have been made of both Old and New Testaments in modern times, and in almost all modern languages. It will be sufficient to notice those only which have been made for our own country.

The earliest translation of which any portion remains was the Saxon ; and there exist also a few fragments of some others. But the first of any great importance was the New Testament of John Wicliff, who also commenced a translation of the Old Testament, which he did not live to complete. Wicliff's translation was from the Latin. He died in 1384.

William Tyndale printed an English New Testament in 1526, which was reprinted in 1527, 1528, and 1530. In 1534 he published a revised and corrected edition. In the same year one George Joye published an edition of Tyndale's work, with some alterations. Tyndale translated also parts of the Old Testament ; and George Joye, too, published translations of some of the prophetical books.

The first complete English Bible was the production of Miles Coverdaile, Bishop of Exeter, and was published in 1535, with a dedication to King Henry VIII. Bishop Coverdaile, when in exile, during the reign of Queen Mary, took a prominent part in preparing a new English Bible, translated from the Hebrew and

Greek, which, from the place of its publication in 1560, is called the "Geneva" Bible.

In 1537 was published "Matthews' Bible," chiefly copied from Tyndale's and Coverdaile's translations.

In 1539 Archbishop Cranmer's, or "The Great Bible," was printed. It was founded on Bishop Coverdaile's version, but carefully revised and compared with the originals. This Bible went through several editions; one was published in 1541 under the care of Toustal, Bishop of Durham.

The "prayer-book version" of the Psalms is taken from this Bible; each verse being divided by a colon (:) for convenience in chanting.

The first Prayer-book was published in 1549; and the Psalms, as therein printed, had become so well-known and popular, that it was felt unwise to attempt any alteration, on the publication of the authorised version sixty years later.

Taverner's Bible, published about 1540, under the patronage of Sir Thomas Cromwell, differed but little from Matthews'.

In 1568 was printed in folio "The Bishops' Bible," the production of the bishops of Coventry, Ely, Exeter, St David's, Worcester, Winchester, Litchfield, London, Norwich, and Chichester, under the direction of Archbishop Parker. This Bible went through several editions.

In 1576 a person named Tonson printed a translation of the New Testament, which was several times reprinted.

All these versions having been the result of the

labours of the Protestants, the English Roman Catholic College at Rheims produced a translation of the Old and New Testaments with the Apocrypha. This was printed at Douay in the years 1609, 1610, and is now known as the "Douay Bible." Most of the translators were graduates of the English universities, who, being Roman Catholics, left this country on the death of Queen Mary. The "Douay Bible" is the one still used by English Roman Catholics.

The last and most important translation which remains to be noticed is that now in use, wherever the English language is spoken, our "*authorised version*." It was originated by an address from the convocation of bishops and clergy in 1603 to King James, who, in reply to them, appointed fifty-four learned men as translators; but it seems from the list on record that only forty-seven acted.* It was also specially desired

* A list of these forty-seven translators may not be uninteresting. It seems that they were employed in parties at various places, and that each party had assigned to it its own special duty.

ON THE OLD TESTAMENT.

Ten at Westminster.

Dr Andrews, Master of Pembroke, Cambridge.
Dr Overall, Master of Catherine Hall, Cambridge.
Dr Saravia, Prebend of Canterbury.
Dr Clarke, Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge.
Dr Laifield, Fellow, Trinity College.
Dr Leigh, Archdeacon of Middlesex.
Dr Bingley.
Mr King.
Mr Thompson.
Mr Bedwell, St John's College, Cambridge.

by the king that in cases of difficulty, reference should be made to any one able to assist. The translation produced by these scholars was subjected to the most careful and diligent revision; and the Bible, the result of their labours, was published in London in 1611. Since which date the printing-press, aided of late by the steam-engine, stereotype-plates, and improved machinery, has not ceased to pour forth copies of

Eight at Cambridge.

Mr Lively.

Dr Richardson, Master, Trinity College, Cambridge.

Dr Chadderton, Master, Emmanuel College, do.

Mr Dillingham, Fellow, Christ's College, do.

Dr Andrews, Master, Jesus College, do.

Mr Harrison, Vice-master, Trinity College, do.

Mr Spalding, Fellow of St John's College, do.

Mr Bing, Fellow of Peter House, do.

Seven at Oxford.

Dr Harding, President, Magdalen College.

Dr Reynolds, President, Corpus Christi College.

Dr Holland, Rector, Exeter College.

Dr Kilby, Rector, Lincoln College.

Dr Smith, afterwards Bishop of Glo'ster.

Mr Brett.

Mr Fairclowe.

APOCRYPHA.

Seven at Cambridge.

Dr Dupont, Master of Jesus College and Prebend of Ely.

Dr Brainthwaite, Master of Gonville and Caius College.

Dr Radcliffe, Fellow of Trinity College.

Dr Ward, Master of Sidney College.

Mr Downes, Fellow of St John's College.

Mr Boyse, Fellow of St John's College, Prebend of Ely.

Dr Ward, Prebend of Chichester.

this noblest and most faithful version of Holy Scripture. There is little to add on the subject of our English Bible, but that the first copy with marginal references was published in 1664 by John Canne, and that the dates, according to Archbishop Usher's chronology, were printed for the first time in an edition dated Oxford 1684.

NEW TESTAMENT.

Eight at Oxford.

Dr Ravis, afterwards Bishop of London.
Dr Abbot, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury.
Dr Eedes.
Mr Thompson.
Mr Savill.
Dr Peryn.
Dr Ravens.
Mr Harmer.

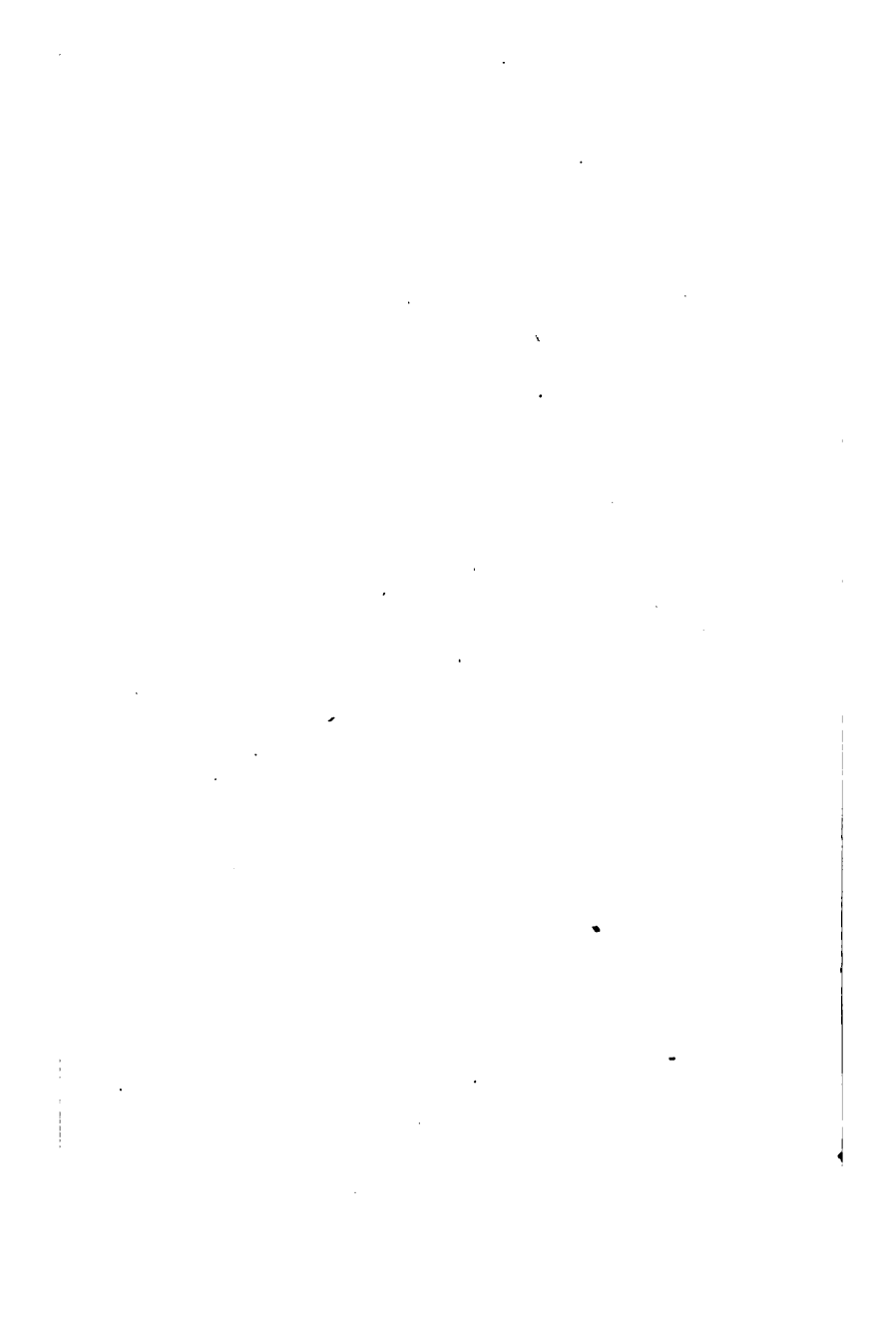
Seven at Westminster.

Dr Barlow, of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, afterwards Bishop of Lincoln.
Dr Hutchinson.
Dr Spencer.
Mr Fenton.
Mr Rabbet.
Mr Sanderson.
Mr Dakins.

Total number of translators, forty-seven.

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